

THE KING'S HIGHWAY

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EDITORIAL

WHY JESUS WENT AWAY

It is expedient for you that I go away for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart I will send him unto you.—John 16-7

These are the words of Jesus our Lord. He is drawing near to the end of his life upon earth. Near to the time when he shall die for the world's redemption. He and His disciples are together on the occasion of the last supper, where Jesus ate with them, and also instituted what is commonly called the Lord's Supper, which he commanded us to observe until he comes again. During this hour he had a long, and very important, conversation with his disciples. He talked to them about God the Father which conversation you will find recorded in the gospel by John, Chapters 13 to 16, and he also talked to God about them, which prayer is recorded in John 17 and the burden of it was for their sanctification.

He tries to break the news of his death to them gently. He speaks of it as his "going away" to prepare a place for them in his Father's house where there are many mansions—and says he will come again and receive them unto himself and have them with him always; but, in spite of the fact that he assured them of his love, and tried to break the news in great tenderness, and told them his going was for their good, and not from any selfish motive. Sorrow filled their hearts at the thought of his departure. And well it might, for they realized that they were parting with the best, truest, most faithful friend that any man had ever found upon earth. Well might their hearts be sorrowful. He had been to them all that they needed since they had left their fishing boats and nets, and various occupations in life, to follow him. He had been their bread winner. He had taken a little lad's lunch of five barley cakes and two small fishes and blessed them, multiplied them, and fed thousands. He had been their doctor. Disease, fever and sickness of every kind had yielded to his healing touch, or released its hold on its victim at his spoken word. He had made the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, the dumb spoke, the lepers were cleansed. The palsied man who was carried into his presence by four, took up his bed upon which he had helplessly lain for years and went his way at the bidding of Jesus. He had broken up a funeral procession, and given a son back to a weeping widowed mother. Yea, his great heart of love and sympathy was touched at the grief of the sisters of Lazarus when their brother died, and Jesus wept also. But he did more than

weep. He called that brother back, who had gone a four days journey into the empire of death, and restored him and comfort to the hearts of those grateful sisters. He was interested in their social life and turned water into wine at the marriage feast. He also took a keen interest in the business affairs of his disciples, and knew where to tell those discouraged fishermen to let down their nets, after they had toiled all night and caught nothing, so they enclosed a multitude of fishes.

And when the tax collector came around and found him and Peter without money He knew where the fish was swimming that had the tribute money in its mouth, and sent Peter to fetch it. Why shouldn't his disciples be content to live forever with such a friend, and why shouldn't they be sorrowful when he talked of leaving them. But he told them, "It is expedient for you," it is better for you that I go away. They could not understand it. Neither can we understand why we have to part with the good in order to obtain the better and the best. The unsaved are so blind to their best interests that they try to content themselves with material blessings, or with human friends and associates, when God has some better thing for us in the realm of grace. Then again, many who have been born again and have some grace in their hearts seem to try to content themselves with it when God would have us to press on unto perfection. Heb. 6-1. Unto the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, and receive the Comforter into our hearts and love him supremely. So sometimes our Father sees that it is expedient, better for us that the good things that we have depended on, leaned on for support should be taken away that we may know him, and love him, depend on him, and serve him as we never have or would, while the good things remain. We read of a young prophet, Isaiah, who was greatly devoted to the good King Uzziah because the king had been so kind to him. Isaiah looked to him continually for support and encouragement. But God took Uzziah away. The young prophet's heart was broken, but looking up through his tears he saw another king. He wrote: I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up. Isaiah got a vision of heavenly things. He saw the seraphim, and heard them cry holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. And in the light of that heavenly revelation he saw also his own uncleanness, and need of cleansing, and cried, "Woe is me for I am undone" because I am a man of unclean lips, and live in the midst of a people of unclean lips for mine eyes have seen the king—the Lord of hosts. And we read how one of the seraphim flew to him with a live coal taken with tongs from off the altar and touched the prophets' lips and pronounced him clean from all his sin and iniquity. Then the prophet heard the voice of the Lord saying whom shall I send and who will go for us. He saw and heard as he never would have while Uzziah lived because his eyes were upon him. But the prophet responded to the call of God and said Here am I, send me and became the greatest prophet of old testament times. Jesus gave his sorrowing disciples two very important reasons why he should go. He promised that by his going two most outstanding needs of man should be met. First the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost should come. He said if I go I will send him unto you. And he did send him, and he is here on a two-fold mission—a mission to the world

and to the Church or God's people. He said when he is come He will convince the world of sin. In man's unsaved state he is so blind to his spiritual needs, his need of Jesus that only the Holy Spirit can reveal it to him, and convince, or convict, him of his need of salvation. Second, he is here as the teacher or guide of God's people. Our Lord said to his disciples he will guide you into all truth. Also he called the Holy Spirit the Comforter because of the comfort he would impart to those in trouble and sorrow. There are so many good people in these trying days that have sorrows and burdens because of losses and crosses and sins of others. Sorrow which no earthly balm can heal, that Jesus is here in the person of the Spirit to comfort our hearts, for as God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself so Christ is in the Holy Spirit continuing his work today.

A second reason why Jesus went away was that he might become our intercessor at the right hand of God. He is preeminently qualified to be our intercessor. In his incarnation he took our humanity upon him, was in all points tempted like as we are when without sin, knows how to succor them that are tempted, and to make a way of escape. He is our advocate, our high priest, our days-man between us and God, so all men may come to God through him and be saved. And when the child of God fully consecrates himself to God a living sacrifice, the Holy Spirit, the Comforter will come in and fully cleanse, and abide as Jesus promised. "O spread the tidings round wherever man is found. Wherever human hearts and human woes abound. Let every Christian tongue proclaim the joyful sound: The Comforter has come."

THE CREDULITY OF THE UNBELIEVER!

Speaking of how water reaches the tops of trees, H. D. Tiemann in "American Forests" says, "For three hundred years or more biologists have been grappling with this seemingly superficial question of the rise of sap, but the answer is not yet given. * * * Nature has devised a means of accomplishing the result in a practical manner and by a method which science has yet to discover."

The astronomer reverently said that he was "thinking God's thoughts after Him." But here in this little matter of the flow of sap men have not yet even been able to discover how it is done. They can not even think God's thoughts after Him.

Isn't materialism grand! It would teach us that with no guiding mind at all the trees have learned to do marvels which men at their best (so far) have not been able even to comprehend! Oh, the credulity of the "unbeliever!"—The Free Methodist.

AT THE CROSSROADS

"As I see it," declared Dr. W. R. Matthews, Dean of St. Paul's in London, "the civilized world is now in the midst of a profound spiritual and moral crisis. It is standing at the parting of the ways. It is deciding whether it will definitely abandon the Christian faith and values, or take the gospel much more seriously than it has ever done before.

"It seems, then, that the conflict of the future will not be between Christianity and Agnosticism, but rather between Christianity and some form of religion which substitutes the state or the community for God and looks for an earthly utopia rather than the kingdom of God."—Wesleyan Methodist.